



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

CHRISTOPHER T. HEAD
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ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24019

SEVENTEENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
HEALTH, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS (VICE-CHAIR)
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS
COMMERCE AND ENERGY
RULES

February 2, 2023

Dr. Homer Wilkes
Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
c/o Jefferson National Forest
MVP Project
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019

Subject: Supplemental EIS #50036 (Mountain Valley Pipeline and Equitrans Expansion Project)

Dear Dr. Wilkes:

I write today in the interest of the environment and constituents in the Roanoke area to request the U.S. Forest Service approve the requested permit for Mountain Valley Pipeline to complete its work on a small portion of the Jefferson National Forest.

As an elected member of the House of Delegates, I frequently hear from residents who have tired of the perpetual construction of this important natural gas pipeline. Activists, many of them from outside Virginia, have been obstacles to progress by challenging permits, filing lawsuits and damaging property.

Project opponents' disregard for the rule of law has been facilitated through endless regulatory delays, which have created new opportunities for more protesters to engage in more illegal acts that endanger project crew members, law enforcement personnel and the public at large. This must stop.

Mountain Valley has assembled a responsible and thorough plan to mitigate impacts associated with its remaining work in the Jefferson National Forest. The project's work is nearly 94 percent complete, and its remaining work in the forest accounts for just 3.5 miles of the pipeline's roughly 303 mile length. The company has indicated its intent to bore under the Appalachian Trail and at many waterbodies to avoid surface-level disturbances, and will employ a variety of additional techniques and practices to ensure the further protection of sensitive resources.

Finishing work and restoring the right of way should be everyone's priority because it is the most sensible and most appropriate action for the public and for the environment. This pipeline is an



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important piece of Southwest Virginia's economic future, and it will generate millions of dollars in valuable tax revenue for local governments after it begins operation. Furthermore, it will bring a critical supply of affordable natural gas that this region requires. The historic winter storm that hit Southwest Virginia in February 2021 resulted in an unacceptable shortage of natural gas supplies, which drove up prices for Roanoke area residents. As Roanoke Gas Company's president and CEO told the news media at the time, this would not have happened if the MVP project had been in service.

Every delay of the Mountain Valley Pipeline carries costs that affect more than just the project developers. These delays are costly to Roanoke Gas Company's customers, local governments and the landowners whose lives have been disrupted by construction. They also are costly to the environment; as many others have noted, erosion and sedimentation concerns are best addressed through final restoration.

I urge the Forest Service in the strongest terms possible to move through the remaining regulatory processes swiftly so this infrastructure project can be completed.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Head", written over a large, stylized blue oval.

Delegate Chris Head
Virginia House of Delegates
17th District